

## Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IGA-01 MC-01 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SCS-02 /059 R

DRAFTED BY AF - DBEASUM:JR - AF/E:WBCOOTE

APPROVED BY AF - DBEASUM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 227823

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SIAD'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON

FOLLOWING ARE PRINCIPAL POINTS DISCUSSED IN TALKS WITH  
SOMALI FONSEC ARTEH DURING THE COURSE OF PRESIDENT  
SIAD'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON OCTOBER 10 -12.

1. IN VIEW OF CONCERN EXPRESSED BY PRESIDENT SIAD ON  
SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING THE VISIT REGARDING THE NATURE  
AND SCOPE OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA,  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY EASUM WENT TO CONSIDERABLE LENGTH IN  
EXPLAINING TO FONSEC ARTEH THE REASONS FOR THE PROGRAM  
AND ITS LIMITED AND MODEST NATURE. HE URGED ARTEH TO  
RECOGNIZE THAT, IN THE MINDS OF ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS,  
SOMALIA'S SOVIET-SUPPLIED MILITARY MACHINE IS FAR MORE  
THREATENING THAN PRESIDENT SIAD PRESENTED IT TO US AS  
BEING. (PRESIDENT SIAD ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS STATED THAT  
SOVIET-SUPPLIED ARMOR WAS NEITHER SOPHISTICATED NOR  
COPIOUS AND REPRESENTED A MERELY ROUTINE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE 1963 AGREEMENT.) EASUM CITED, FOR EXAMPLE, THE  
FACT THAT OUR INFORMATION SHOWED SOMALIA WITH TWO TO  
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THREE TIMES THE NUMBER OF TANKS, MORE MODERN AIRCRAFT,

AND MILITARY MANPOWER THAT, ALTHOUGH OF SMALLER ABSOLUTE SIZE, WAS SPREAD FAR LESS THIN THAN ETHIOPIA'S. EASUM GAVE ARTEH THE PUBLISHED FIGURES FOR THE FY '74

AND '75 MILITARY ASSISTANCE REQUEST TO CONGRESS, STRESSING THE MODEST EXTENT TO WHICH THESE LIMITED FUNDS WOULD PERMIT ETHIOPIA TO EXPAND ITS DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY. AS FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF ETHIOPIAN PURCHASES FOR CASH, EASUM NOTED THAT AS A GENERAL RULE, ANYONE CAN BUY ARMS IN THE U.S. COMMERCIAL MARKET. HE SAID THAT IN THE CURRENT CASE, THERE WAS GREAT DOUBT THAT ETHIOPIA WOULD IN FACT DECIDE IT COULD AFFORD TO MAKE ANY SUBSTANTIAL CASH PURCHASES FROM US.

2. THIS EXPLANATION SEEMED TO RELIEVE ARTEH, WHO REITERATED PRESIDENT SIAD'S PLEDGE TO US THAT SOMALIA WOULD NEVER BE THE CAUSE OF WAR OVER THE OGADEN. HE SAID HE WAS PERSONAL WITNESS TO SIAD'S STATEMENTS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS BEFORE THE SUPREME REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL TO THE EFFECT THAT "SOMALIA WILL BE EVEN HUMILIATED BEFORE IT WILL BE THE CAUSE OF WAR WITH ETHIOPIA." HE SAID IT WAS SIAD'S UNIQUE PERSONALITY, CHARISMA, AND LEADERSHIP QUALITIES THAT PERMITTED HIM TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT AND MAKE IT STICK.

3. ON THREE SEPARATE OCCASIONS EASUM AND OTHERS OF US STRESSED TO ARTEH AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SOMALI PARTY OUR CONCERN OVER EXTREME AND UNJUSTIFIED ATTACKS AGAINST THE U.S. IN THE SOMALI PRESS. WE OBSERVED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT WE FAR PREFERRED TO TAKE WHAT PRESIDENT SIAD TOLD US DURING THIS VISIT AS INDICATIVE OF THE TRUE NATURE OF SOMALI ATTITUDES. WE CONSIDERED RECENT PRESS ATTACKS AS HIGHLY UNFORTUNATE AND NOT CONDUCIVE TO THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP PRESIDENT SIAD'S VISIT DID SO MUCH TO ENCOURAGE. ARTEH MADE NO PROMISES BUT ALLEGED TO UNDERSTAND.

4. EASUM EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUED DETENTION OF DAVID LIGHT AND FACT THAT, IN SPITE OF SEVERAL APPROACHES BY AMBASSADOR KIRK, GSDR HAD NOT YET PERMITTED

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CONSULAR ACCESS TO HIM AFTER ALMOST TWO WEEKS' DETENTION. WHILE RECOGNIZING GSDR'S RIGHT TO DETAIN LIGHT IF THERE WERE REASON TO DO SO, EASUM NOTED THAT LIGHT'S FAMILY HAD TOLD US HE HAS MEDICAL PROBLEMS AND WE WERE MOST DESIROUS TO HAVE CONSULAR OFFICER VISIT HIM. EASUM ALSO NOTED CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN MATTER. ARTEH RECALLED THAT AMBASSADOR HAD DISCUSSED LIGHT'S DETENTION WITH HIM AND COMMENTED THAT WHEN AN AMERICAN CROSSED

BORDER IN COMPANY OF ENEMIES OF SOMALIA IT WAS BOUND TO RAISE SOMALI SUSPICIONS. HE DID NOT DISPUTE RIGHT OF CONSULAR ACCESS, HOWEVER, AND PROMISED TO LOOK INTO MATTER UPON HIS RETURN.

5. DURING ARTEH CONVERSATION, DEPT OFFICERS RAISED QUESTION OF SHIP VISIT, INDICATING WE WERE AWARE THE GSDR FOR TWO YEARS HAD "ACCEPTED" PRINCIPLE OF SHIP VISIT. YET WHEN SPECIFIC VISIT WAS PROPOSED, GSDR REPLY WAS ALWAYS THAT TIMING WAS "NOT CONVENIENT". ARTEH SAID HE HAD TOLD AMB. KIRK THAT THE GSDR WOULD BE PROPOSING A DATE FOR A U.S. NAVAL VISIT AFTER CONSULTING WITH DEFENSE OFFICIALS. HE WOULD PURSUE THIS WITH EMBASSY UPON HIS RETURN TO SOMALIA.

6. PRESIDENT SIAD AND HIS PARTY WERE HIGHLY PLEASED WITH WASHINGTON VISIT, STRESSING REPEATEDLY THEIR GRATITUDE FOR OUTSTANDING ARRANGEMENTS AND WARM RECEPTION BY PRESIDENT FORD, ACTING SECRETARY INGERSOLL AND OTHER U.S. OFFICIALS. THEY WERE ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL FOR BEING ALLOWED TO SPEND EXTRA NIGHT AT BLAIR HOUSE, SINCE UNABLE TO GET RESERVATIONS OUT OF NEW YORK UNTIL EVENING OF OCTOBER 12. AT OCT. 11 BLAIR HOUSE LUNCHEON HOSTED BY PRESIDENT SIAD BUT ARRANGED BY DEPT OFFICIALS, SOMALIS WERE DELIGHTED TO RENEW ACQUAINTANCE OF SENATOR HUMPHREY AND CONGRESSMEN DIGGS AND BINGHAM, WHOM THEY REGARDED AS OLD FRIENDS. LUNCH, HIGHLIGHTED BY SPIRITED AND FRIENDLY CONVERSATION WHICH PROVIDED SOMALIS OPPORTUNITY TO TELL THEIR STORY TO IMPORTANT U.S. LEGISLATORS, WAS GREAT SUCCESS. SIAD EXPRESSED HOPE THAT MORE CONGRESSMEN, AS WELL AS AMERICANS GENERALLY, WOULD VISIT SOMALIA.

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7. AMBASSADOR ADDOU TOLD DEPTOFF THAT VISIT EXCEEDED EVEN THEIR HIGHEST EXPECTATIONS. BENEFITS IN TERMS OF PRACTICAL RESULTS FOR US-SOMALI RELATIONS (E.G., LIGHT PROBLEM, SHIP VISIT) REMAIN TO BE SEEN, BUT THERE NO QUESTION WASHINGTON EFFORTS TO ASSURE SIAD OF U.S. DESIRE TO IMPROVED RELATIONS IMPRESSED SIAD. WE HOPE EMBASSY WILL BE ABLE TO CAPITALIZE ON THEM. INGERSOLL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 OCT 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** elyme  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ORIGIN AF  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** elyme  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 JUL 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 JUL 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <18 MAR 2003 by elyme>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESIDENT SIAD'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON FOLLOWING ARE PRINCIPAL POINTS DISCUSSED IN TALKS WITH  
**TAGS:** PFOR, OVIP, MASS, ET, US, (SIAD BARRE, MOHAMED)  
**To:** MOGADISCIO ADDIS ABABA  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005